

July 7, 2004

Chairman Michael Powell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20554

RE: WC Docket No. 03-133

Dear Chairman Powell:

Latino and other minority communities rely upon low-cost telecommunications services to accomplish many every day tasks, from looking for a job or affordable housing to staying in touch with family and friends. But pending before the FCC is a proposal that would introduce new charges and fees upon services upon which we depend, immediately harming millions of Latinos and other consumers nationwide.

I understand that the FCC is considering applying "in-state" access charges and other fees on certain prepaid calling card services. Many Latinos, particularly those on fixed incomes or those establishing a credit history, bank accounts and other means necessary to subscribe to local telephone service, rely upon these prepaid calling cards to stay connected at set affordable rates. Students, immigrants, senior citizens, and others face similar challenges.

As a result, prepaid calling cards are the only option available -- without them, many consumers could, quite literally, be left without access to telephone service. Raising the price of prepaid calling cards will directly harm individuals who can least afford price increases.

Imposing in-state charges would amount to a substantial increase in the cost of prepaid calls, destroying the utility of calling cards to disadvantaged consumers. Allowing the large, local telephone companies to collect such charges, even when they do not sell the calling card to a customer, would drive up prices; thus making these services substantially less affordable. Please look out for consumers and refuse to impose new access charges and fees on prepaid calling card services.

Sincerely,

Eva Caidenas, TX

ccs: Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy
Commissioner Kevin Martin
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein
Senator
Senator
Congressperson

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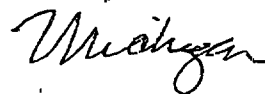
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Minorities, low-income families, senior citizens, immigrants, college students and military families rely upon calling card services for a variety of needs. Many of these consumers do not have a credit history, bank accounts, or the means to pay a large deposit for local telephone service. For these consumers, a prepaid card may be the only option they have to stay connected – to make phone calls to look for a job, for affordable housing, make a doctor's appointment, or stay in touch with family and friends. These cards offer convenience and predictable cost, as there are no hidden fees or charges. In economically disadvantaged areas, consumers literally risk being disconnected if the prices of these cards increase. Prepaid calling cards are indispensable to consumer groups because they are an affordable alternative to regular and wireless telephone services.

But such price hikes are precisely what the FCC will do if it inflicts new "in-state" access charges and other fees on pre-paid cards. The fees would funnel directly to large local telephone companies while the burden would fall squarely upon those consumers that can least afford to bear it.

Adding access charges to be paid to local telephone companies will substantially increase the per minute charges on pre-paid calls, jeopardizing the benefits Latino and other communities gain from these services. Please stop any effort to raise rates on American consumers and decide that these services are not subject to the exorbitant new access charges and other fees.

Sincerely,



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Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy
Commissioner Kevin Martin
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein
Senator
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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Elena Méndez", followed by the number "74".

ccs: Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy
Commissioner Kevin Martin
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein
Senator
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Sincerely,

Steven Valle, Texas

ccs: Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy
Commissioner Kevin Martin
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein
Senator
Senator
Congressperson

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Sincerely,

Kathy Sharp Texas

ccs: Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy
Commissioner Kevin Martin
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein
Senator
Senator
Congressperson

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The Latino community is particularly sensitive to any price increase for pre-paid calling cards; approximately 43% of Latino households use them. Indeed, half of the households with incomes below \$20,000 have used prepaid cards. Pre-paid calling cards are so prevalent in part because they save consumers money.

With gas and milk prices already holding fixed and low income consumers hostage, we should not be faced with rising telephone service costs as well. In particular, many low-income households who are on fixed incomes depend entirely upon prepaid service because they cannot meet the credit rating or hefty deposit requirements that local phone companies insist upon before getting a phone. With prepaid cards, consumers can make calls from payphones or the telephones of family members and neighbors. We can use these cards to stay "connected" as we look for jobs, hunt for houses, or schedule many of the other daily appointments that we all have.

I simply find it unimaginable that the FCC would impose new charges and fees on these cards. Some of the nation's largest telephone companies would be the largest beneficiaries of such charges. **The FCC should stand up for consumer interests over corporate gain by keeping affordable prepaid calling cards a priority.**

Sincerely, *Maria Alvarez*

M. C. Alley

ccs: Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy
Commissioner Kevin Martin
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein
Senator
Senator
Congressperson

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Sincerely,

Delia Mendez TX

ccs: Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy
Commissioner Kevin Martin
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein
Senator
Senator
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Bustamante Texas

ccs: Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy
Commissioner Kevin Martin
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein
Senator
Senator
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 TX

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Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy
Commissioner Kevin Martin
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein
Senator
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Sincerely,

Leather Hill Delaware (Dover, Delaware)

ccs: Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy
Commissioner Kevin Martin
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein
Senator
Senator
Congressperson

maadd

Ministerial Alliance Against the Digital Divide

July 14, 2004

Chairman Michael K. Powell
Commissioner Kathleen Q. Abernathy
Commissioner Michael J. Copps
Commissioner Kevin J. Martin
Commissioner Jonathan S. Adelstein
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St., SW
Washington, DC 20554

Re: WC Docket No. 03-133

Dear Chairman Powell and Commissioners:

The Ministerial Alliance Against the Digital Divide is an organization of Chicago-area ministers devoted to bridging the digital divide between those who have ready access to telecommunications services and those who do not. We strongly oppose any new charges or fees on prepaid calling cards, because such an action would result in higher prices and jeopardize the ability of lower-income and fixed-income consumers to stay connected.


The African-American community is particularly sensitive to any price increase for pre-paid calling cards; approximately 70% of African American households have used them. And the affordability of pre-paid cards is of the utmost importance to lower-income and fixed-income consumers, since they offer an easy, economical way to stay in touch with friends and relatives across the country.

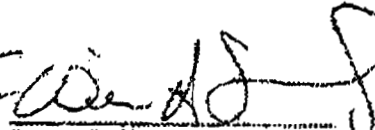
For many people, home phone service is not an option given the high monthly costs and the substantial deposit often required of consumers who have insufficient credit histories. As a result, pre-paid calling cards serve as a dial-tone lifeline for those who cannot afford traditional local phone service. The cards are used to call employers, make doctors appointments, and for many other purposes that we often take for granted.


The FCC's interest in applying new and additional "access charges" and fees to pre-paid calling card services is particularly troubling given the recent price increases for commodities like gasoline, milk and other basic necessities.

We urge you not to raise the cost of pre-paid calling cards with extra charges and fees. Raising the costs associated with pre-paid calling cards will only pose yet another burden on the most vulnerable members of our society.

Sincerely,


Reverend James I. Demus III
Co-Director, MAADD


Reverend William H. Samuels
Co-Director, MAADD


Reverend Walter B. Johnson, Jr.
Co-Director, MAADD

July 7, 2004

Chairman Michael Powell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
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RE: WC Docket No. 03-133

Chairman Powell:

The FCC should **not** impose new access charges and fees upon prepaid calling cards. If you move to increase the cost of these cards, you will simply drive up the cost for minority or disadvantaged individuals to stay in touch in their communities.

The Latino community is particularly sensitive to any price increase for pre-paid calling cards; approximately 43% of Latino households use them. Indeed, half of the households with incomes below \$20,000 have used prepaid cards. Pre-paid calling cards are so prevalent in part because they save consumers money.

With gas and milk prices already holding fixed and low income consumers hostage, we should not be faced with rising telephone service costs as well. In particular, many low-income households who are on fixed incomes depend entirely upon prepaid service because they cannot meet the credit rating or hefty deposit requirements that local phone companies insist upon before getting a phone. With prepaid cards, consumers can make calls from payphones or the telephones of family members and neighbors. We can use these cards to stay "connected" as we look for jobs, hunt for houses, or schedule many of the other daily appointments that we all have.

I simply find it unimaginable that the FCC would impose new charges and fees on these cards. Some of the nation's largest telephone companies would be the largest beneficiaries of such charges. **The FCC should stand up for consumer interests over corporate gain by keeping affordable prepaid calling cards a priority.**

Sincerely,

 *Anna L. Sanchez*

Texas

ccs: Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy
Commissioner Kevin Martin
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein
Senator
Senator
Congressperson

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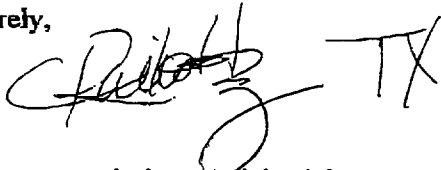
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 , Texas

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Sincerely,

Arifa Khan - Texas

ccs: Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy
Commissioner Kevin Martin
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein
Senator
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Sincerely,

William Johnson, Maryland

ccs: Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy
Commissioner Kevin Martin
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein
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Rosaura Reyes Texas

ccs: Commissioner Michael Copps
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I simply find it unimaginable that the FCC would impose new charges and fees on these cards. Some of the nation's largest telephone companies would be the largest beneficiaries of such charges. **The FCC should stand up for consumer interests over corporate gain by keeping affordable prepaid calling cards a priority.**

Sincerely,

Connie Cruz *Harlingen, Texas*

ccs: Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy
Commissioner Kevin Martin
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein
Senator
Senator
Congressperson

July 7, 2004

Chairman Michael Powell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20554

RE: WC Docket No. 03-133

Chairman Powell:

The FCC should not impose new access charges and fees upon prepaid calling cards. If you move to increase the cost of these cards, you will simply drive up the cost for minority or disadvantaged individuals to stay in touch in their communities.

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Wichy Salazar *New Mexico*

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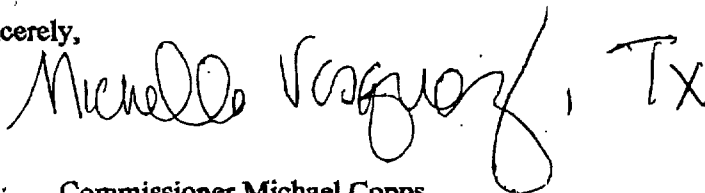
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Sincerely,

Judith Macias
TX

ccs: Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy
Commissioner Kevin Martin
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein
Senator
Senator
Congressperson

July 7, 2004

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July 7, 2004

Chairman Michael Powell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20554

RE: WC Docket No. 03-133

Dear Chairman Powell:

Latino and other minority communities rely upon low-cost telecommunications services to accomplish many every day tasks, from looking for a job or affordable housing to staying in touch with family and friends. But pending before the FCC is a proposal that would introduce new charges and fees upon services upon which we depend, immediately harming millions of Latinos and other consumers nationwide.

I understand that the FCC is considering applying "in-state" access charges and other fees on certain prepaid calling card services. Many Latinos, particularly those on fixed incomes or those establishing a credit history, bank accounts and other means necessary to subscribe to local telephone service, rely upon these prepaid calling cards to stay connected at set affordable rates. Students, immigrants, senior citizens, and others face similar challenges.

As a result, prepaid calling cards are the only option available – without them, many consumers could, quite literally, be left without access to telephone service. Raising the price of prepaid calling cards will directly harm individuals who can least afford price increases.

Imposing in-state charges would amount to a substantial increase in the cost of prepaid calls, destroying the utility of calling cards to disadvantaged consumers. Allowing the large, local telephone companies to collect such charges, even when they do not sell the calling card to a customer, would drive up prices; thus making these services substantially less affordable. Please look out for consumers and refuse to impose new access charges and fees on prepaid calling card services.

Sincerely,

Melanie Irgano, Texas

ccs: Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy
Commissioner Kevin Martin
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein
Senator
Senator
Congressperson

July 7, 2004

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Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20554

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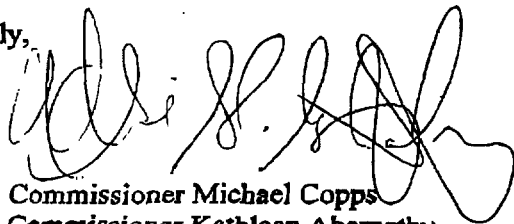
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 TEXAS

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